



Human Security Agenda

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Foreword



As the NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security and for Human Security, I am proud to be a part of an organization that acknowledges the importance of human security – an approach that gives primacy to people.

It is my great pleasure to share this publication which aims at raising awareness on the importance of the Human Security Agenda for NATO and its current state of affairs, including the actions the Alliance undertakes within this remit.

At the Washington Summit in July 2024, NATO celebrates its 75th Anniversary, offering a unique opportunity to recall the numerous achievements on advancing this Agenda within the Alliance, but also to reflect on the way forward, both at NATO and within the wider security community.

In 2022, NATO made human security an integral part of its Strategic Concept, highlighting its cross-cutting importance for the Alliance's three core tasks of deterrence and defence, crisis prevention and management, and cooperative security. It is and has always been at the core of NATO's values. This publication will further showcase how the Human Security Agenda is mainstreamed across NATO's activities, from our work on resilience to climate security.

My hope is that this publication will provide a contribution to the ongoing discussions on the topic and will serve as a valuable resource as we seek to understand the complex challenges our world is facing today and how best to address them.

At NATO, we remain committed to promoting this Agenda and to ensuring that our policies and actions reflect this commitment. We recognise that, while there is a strong institutional basis, there is still work to be done, and we are fully dedicated to continuing our efforts in this regard.

I would like to express my gratitude to all those who work tirelessly to promote human security in their respective fields. I hope that this publication will inspire others to join us in our efforts to enhance human security – and to create a safer, more secure and more just world for all.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Irene Fellin'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'I'.

Irene Fellin

NATO Secretary General's Special Representative
for Women, Peace and Security and for Human Security



The Swedish corvette K35 Karlstad at Trondheim harbour during exercise Trident Juncture 2018 in Norway

Overview of Human Security at NATO

A. Introduction and background on human security

Over time, the international community has come to recognise that a traditional “state security” approach, focused strictly on protecting the integrity and sovereignty of the state - its borders, institutions and values - is necessary but insufficient on its own. The shifted approach to security was prompted by a growing wave of complex, interdependent and transnational crises, such as terrorism or environmental concerns, coupled with an increase in civil wars and intrastate and urban conflicts. This has led to an understanding that modern security challenges must be addressed inseparably from considerations of the civilian populations.

In this context, a new and broader security paradigm brings the security of people to the fore - under the concept of human security. It is a multi-sectoral approach that focuses on the protection of people and communities from a range of threats and vulnerabilities. Human security allows to account for the root causes, by-products and instruments that exacerbate conflict and instability by recognising that security is not only about military capabilities, but also about the underlying social, economic, and political factors that contribute to it.

The concept of human security emerged in the 1990s and was first introduced at the United Nations (UN) in 1994, in its General Assembly Resolution 66/290. The aim of human security was framed as achieving individuals’ “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want”.¹ Human security was understood as “an approach to assist Member States in identifying and addressing pervasive and cross-cutting challenges to the survival, livelihoods and dignity of their people”.²

Preamble of the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949

“[The Parties to this Treaty] are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.”

¹ UNDP, Human Development Report: New Dimensions of Human Security, 1994.

² See United Nations General Assembly Resolution 66/290.

As an Alliance committed to defending and promoting the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law, human security is at the core of NATO's common values. Human security has therefore been integrated into NATO's activities and structures over the past decades, notably through the development of a robust institutional framework, policies and guidelines to operationalise the Agenda - all tailored to the needs and mandate of a political-military organisation.

Indeed, human security was first mentioned in the Wales Summit Declaration in 2014 as a topic of practical cooperation with partners to address common security threats. Since the Brussels Summit in 2021, Summit communiqués have consistently mentioned human security in dedicated paragraphs. By doing so, NATO reaffirmed its commitment to advancing the Agenda at the highest political level. The Madrid and Vilnius Summit communiqués of 2022 and 2023 respectively also underlined the cross-cutting importance of human security to NATO's three core tasks.

B. What is human security for NATO?

For NATO, the term human security refers to the risks and threats to civilian populations which may arise in all that the Alliance does.

Heads of State and Government of NATO Allies formally outlined NATO's approach towards human security at the 2022 Madrid Summit, by endorsing the Human Security Approach and Guiding Principles. This document provides the Alliance with a common understanding of human security and sets the principles guiding its integration in all that the Alliance does. While NATO's Human Security Approach is drawn from that of the UN, its scope has been adapted to the context and needs of a political-military Alliance. Indeed, NATO's modern defence posture, which includes a range of effective weapon systems, infrastructure, and most importantly, well-trained military forces, has the potential to support and promote human security within and beyond the borders of its Allies.

NATO's Human Security Approach is people-centred, gender-responsive, prevention- and protection-oriented. Its objective is to avert and respond to risks and threats to all civilians and their objects, especially in situations of conflict or crisis.

For NATO, human security encompasses five areas of work: Protection of Civilians (PoC); Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV); Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings (CTHB); Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC); and Cultural Property Protection (CPP).



Figure 1

NATO's human security approach is based on seven guiding principles, namely:

1. Be people-centred, actively integrate gender perspectives, and address the differentiated impacts of conflict and crisis on different people in the population, especially individuals in situations of vulnerability or marginalisation;
2. Be prevention and protection oriented;
3. Take into account local customs and social norms in the communities coming into contact with NATO in Alliance operations, missions and activities, while respecting the common values and principles of the Alliance;
4. Be consistent with international law;
5. Respect and provide space for the neutral, independent and impartial work of humanitarian actors, whose operational viability and safety is essential during armed conflict and other situations of violence;
6. Be in full respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States;
7. Pursue cooperation with relevant actors such as the United Nations, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the African Union, host nations, partners and civil society.

The Human Security Unit, situated in the Office of the Secretary General, leads on advancing all five human security areas of work across all that NATO does –under the remit of the Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security and for Human Security.

Cooperation with other relevant actors – guiding principle 7 of the Human Security Approach

As a key pillar of the global multilateral architecture, NATO integrates the values of democracy, individual liberty, human rights and the rule of law across the organization and in its relations with partners, including other international organizations. This is particularly relevant in the current context, as Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine threatens to erode multilateralism and undermine the rules-based international order.

NATO remains committed to working closely with other international actors to advance human security, as mandated by Allied leaders in the 2022 Strategic Concept. The Alliance includes human security issues in its political dialogue at all levels with other international actors, such as the United Nations, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe or the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). This includes discussing the development and implementation of respective human security policies, exchanging views regarding regional developments with a people-centred approach, and exploring the human security implications of certain key areas, such as emerging new technologies or climate change.

The Alliance also integrates human security guiding principles into its cooperation in areas such as military education and training, exercises, or the exchange of best practices and lessons learned. This allows for mutually

beneficial exchanges in which NATO benefits from the expertise of other organizations, in the field of human security to better develop and integrate human security policies across the NATO enterprise.

For example, NATO-ICRC cooperation is longstanding and comprises both high-level political dialogue and practical cooperation. The ICRC President regularly briefs the North Atlantic Council – NATO's principal decision-making body – on the humanitarian challenges and concerns of existing or emerging crises. Informal staff-to-staff dialogue between NATO International and International Military Staff (IS/IMS) and the ICRC is ongoing on various topics, including on human security. The ICRC continues to cooperate with the two Strategic Commands, Allied Command Operations (ACO) and Allied Command Transformation (ACT), under a trilateral Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2012, which includes participation in NATO Training and Education activities.



CIMIC in KFOR in 2020, donation of Kosovar NGO which aims to provide quality life and full rights to people with autism.

Civil-military cooperation

Civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) is a military joint function that integrates the understanding of the civil factors of the operating environment and enables, facilitates and conducts civil-military interaction to support the accomplishment of missions and military strategic objectives in peacetime, crises and conflict.

The [CIMIC Centre of Excellence](#) (CIMIC-COE) in the Hague and the Centre of Military Contribution to Peace Support (MC2PS) at the [Finnish Defence Forces International Centre](#) (FINCENT), have extensive experience in offering Trainings and Education on CIMIC, as well as Analyses and Assessment

in which human security related aspects are being addressed and covered. Indeed, CIMIC is the main area in which all human security topics come into play. Promoting long-term, sustainable peace, security and stability is best achieved in cooperation with the local authorities, population and civil society, such as through relevant international organizations and/or NGOs working for human rights, including gender equality. Effective liaison and coordination with these actors are essential towards appropriately operationalising human security in the context of an operation, mission or activity.

C. Why is human security important to NATO?

Men, women, boys and girls as well as various communities and groups within a given society are affected differently by armed conflict and crisis and therefore have differentiated security needs. Identifying and appropriately responding to these specific needs in the local context is essential for NATO's approach to human security, in line with its common values of individual liberty, human rights, democracy, and the rule of law as well as the moral necessity of protecting the civilian population. Against the backdrop of increased strategic competition in NATO's security environment, due consideration to human security enables NATO to distinguish itself from its adversaries who deliberately target civilians in conflict or crisis.

In addition, NATO's experience in its operations, missions and activities has shown that taking a human security approach is essential for success, as it provides a heightened understanding of conflict and crisis through a deeper and more comprehensive view of the human environment. Integrating human security considerations into NATO's core tasks aims to prevent unintended consequences, such as harm to civilians, that can undermine operations, missions and activities. It may also help build support for NATO's actions among local populations, which is essential in gaining legitimacy and achieving long-term success.

With the increasing urbanisation of modern warfare, the need to incorporate human security considerations is more relevant than ever. For example, urban warfare increases the impact on the civilian population as a whole, as well as the interaction between armed forces and civilians – which can lead to an increase in civilian harm or casualties. It is also important to note that certain groups are more vulnerable and suffer disproportionately from these effects. In addition, cultural property located in urban areas also becomes more vulnerable to damage, destruction or theft.

This trend has been illustrated in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. From wilful killing of civilians, torture, rape and other sexual violence to the deliberate targeting of Ukrainian critical infrastructure and cultural property – Russia is instrumentalising civilians in this war in an attempt to erase Ukrainian identity and undermine the people's resilience and will to fight.

Attention to human security thus enhances operational effectiveness and contributes to lasting peace and security, whereas neglect thereof has the potential to undercut the effectiveness and sustainability of the Alliance's actions. By recognising the importance of human security, NATO ensures that its actions are consistent with its values and principles and can help prevent the escalation of conflict and crisis, thereby contributing to a more stable, secure and peaceful world.

Human security and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

NATO also recognises the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment in promoting security and stability by committing to mainstream NATO's Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda across its three core tasks. The Human Security Approach also notes that human security and the WPS Agenda "complement and reinforce each other, across all core tasks".

Both human security and WPS reflect a people-centred and human rights-based approach – meaning both recognise the disproportionate or distinct impact of conflict or crisis on different segments of the population. While human security considers the safety and security of all people, WPS highlights the additional challenges faced by women and

girls due to pervasive gender inequality. The first guiding principle of the Human Security Approach provides that NATO will "actively integrate gender perspectives, and address the differentiated impacts of conflict and crisis on different people in the population, especially individuals in situations of vulnerability or marginalisation".

In 2024, the Alliance adopted an updated WPS Policy that aims to integrate these gender perspectives into all aspects of NATO's work, including in its operations, training, and partnerships. The new Policy aligns to the 2022 Strategic Concept, reflects the changed security environment since the last Policy of 2018, and emphasises the integration of WPS across NATO's three core tasks.



NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept, paragraph 5

"We will promote good governance and integrate climate change, human security and the Women, Peace and Security agenda across all our tasks."

D. Integration of human security in NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept



NATO has taken several important steps at the highest political level to institutionalise human security, ensuring that it is formally integrated into all NATO structures at all levels.

A major step in the institutionalisation process of human security at NATO's strategic level was the adoption of the Alliance's new Strategic Concept at the Madrid Summit in 2022. This document is intended to guide the Alliance's priorities, tasks and approaches for the next decade. Human security was included for the first time, showcasing that NATO has elevated its commitment to human security to the highest political level. The Strategic Concept underlines that human security should be integrated across NATO's three core tasks of deterrence and defence; crisis prevention and management; and cooperative security.

Integrating human security across all tasks requires that considerations for the comprehensive safety and security of the populations be mainstreamed into all that NATO does, and at all stages and levels of its operations, missions and activities. Wherever NATO operates, its objective includes preventing and responding to risks and threats to all people, especially in conflict or crisis situations.

But why and how is human security relevant to each of NATO's three core tasks, and what does this integration actually mean in practice?

1. Deterrence and defence

As a defensive Alliance, NATO is committed to safeguarding the freedom and security of all its Allies and their populations and territories, against all threats and from all directions. Deterrence and defence are the backbone of Allies' commitment to defend each other, enshrined in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. Since Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, NATO has further enhanced its deterrence and defence posture.

Integrating the Human Security Approach in NATO's task of deterrence and defence:

- Supports NATO's 360-degree approach against all threats in order to maintain a credible military posture.
- Protects all civilians in Allied territory, including the most vulnerable, from the direct and indirect effects of armed conflict or crisis in any required military intervention. This includes ensuring that they are protected from external threats, such as terrorism and cyber-attacks, as well as internal threats, such as social unrest and economic instability, which may also be leveraged by external actors.
- Acknowledges that the security of Allies is closely linked to the well-being and security of their citizens, thereby enhancing NATO's ability to understand conflict drivers and identify potential risks and vulnerabilities.
- Recognises the importance of minimising civilian casualties and ensures that the conduct of military operations respects international law, including international human rights and humanitarian law.
- Strengthens the Alliance's societal resilience by enabling the full, equal, safe and meaningful participation of all segments of the population, paying particular attention to the most vulnerable groups in society.



Building national and collective resilience as well as civil preparedness, as anchored in Article 3 of the North Atlantic Treaty, is essential to a credible deterrence and defence posture, and vital to the protection of Allies' societies, populations and shared values. It consists in maintaining and developing Allies' national and collective capacity to resist armed attack and to recover from shocks.

NATO's resilience work is a separate but related, concurrent and reinforcing area to human security. Effective efforts to strengthen societal resilience must take human security into account and be applied in an inclusive manner, including through the integration of gender perspectives.

The three core functions of civil preparedness are:

1. continuity of government
2. continuity of essential services to the population
3. civil support to military

Societal groups and individual citizens can play a key role in supporting these core functions. By enhancing the resilience of their citizens and civil societies, Allies are boosting societal resilience as a whole and supporting the broader interests of national and collective defence.

The non-binding guidance to enhance societal resilience, approved by the North Atlantic Council in 2023, pays particular attention to different groups of citizens, especially the most vulnerable groups of civilian populations, because of their different needs. It also focuses on education for people with special needs, such as basic first aid training and disaster response specific training for children and youth at schools.

Exercises at strategic and operational level

To best prepare for an Article 5 scenario, NATO conducts various trainings and Alliance wide exercises at the strategic and operational levels that integrate and address human security.

Exercise Eagle Eye 2024 “Military Contribution to Human Security (MC2HS) in an Urban Environment”³ took place in April 2024 at the operational headquarters of the Rapid Reaction Corps (NRDC-ITA) in Solbiate Olona (VA). NATO’s Special Representative for

Women, Peace, and Security and for Human Security, Ms. Irene Fellin, participated in the event, along with Italian and Allied officers, as well as academics and specialists in the field of human security.

Special attention was given to understanding the challenges and dilemmas regarding the security of the civilian population in an urban context.



“Human security is not only crucial for the military mission’s success, but it is a part of it. NRDC ITA is well set to incorporate all progress in understanding human security into its new role as NATO’s Allied Response Force (ARF) - SACEUR’s first responder within or outside of Europe. Human security is central to our approach to operations since the planning phase. Our assessment of the human environment and our liaison with non-military actors are key to the accomplishment of our mission.”

NRDC-ITA Commander, Lieutenant General Lorenzo D’Addario

³ See <https://www.nrdc-ita.nato.int/newsroom/news-archive/2024/at-nrdc-ita--the-eagle-eye-2024-human-security-in-urban-environment>.

2. Crisis prevention and management

NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept, paragraph 39

“Human security, including the protection of civilians and civilian harm mitigation, is central to our approach to crisis prevention and management. We will work with other international actors to address the broader conditions fuelling crises and pervasive instability and contribute to stabilization and reconstruction.”

Crisis prevention and management refers to actions taken to defuse crises, to prevent their escalation into an armed conflict and to contain hostilities should they arise and could potentially affect Allied security. Crisis management can involve military and non-military measures to address the full spectrum of crises – before, during and after conflicts. Over the past decades, NATO has developed unique capabilities, expertise and lessons learned in crisis management.

In its Human Security Approach, NATO has recognised that conflicts and crises have a significant impact on the civilian population. Prior to Russia's full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine, NATO's strategic priority was largely on crisis management – therefore, this has also been the main focus of the three human security-related policies⁴ adopted before 2022.

Integrating the Human Security Approach in NATO's core task of crisis prevention and management:

- Increases NATO's understanding of the human operating environment, thereby enhancing operational effectiveness through tailored response measures.
- Protects individuals wherever NATO operates from the effects of crises. This includes *inter alia*
 - Avoiding, minimising and mitigating civilian harm
 - Protecting civilians from conflict-related physical violence or threats of physical violence by other actors
 - Preventing, monitoring, reporting and responding to amongst others conflict related sexual violence, grave violations and other serious violations or abuses against children and trafficking in human beings by all relevant actors
- Promotes long-term, sustainable peace, security and stability through cooperation with the local authorities, population and civil society, such as relevant human rights organizations, including those working on gender equality.

⁴ Namely Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings (2004), Protection of Civilians (2016) and Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (2021).

3. Cooperative security

Cooperative security aims to strengthen military dialogue and cooperation with partner countries, other international and non-governmental organisations. It recognises that security is a shared responsibility that requires cooperation and collaboration between states and other actors.

Integrating the Human Security Approach in NATO's core task of cooperative security:

- Promotes the principles of democracy, individual liberty, human rights, and the rule of law by exporting NATO's common values.
- Supports partner countries' efforts in securing sustainable stability and security by addressing the root causes of conflict, such as poverty, gender inequality, and a lack of access to basic services.
- Emphasises the importance of engaging with civil society actors at local, regional and global levels.
- Facilitates multi-stakeholder dialogue, research, exchange of good practices and expertise on human security topics.
- Encourages partners to ensure that considerations for the comprehensive safety and security of populations are embedded into the activities of their armed forces.

The Individually Tailored Partnership Programme (ITPP) provides a framework for cooperation that is geared to each partner's objectives for its relationship with NATO. In recent years, the increase in the number of partners choosing to include an ITPP partnership goal specifically dedicated to human security reflects heightened attention to the topic. Agreed milestones are implemented in various ways, including dialogue and exchange of good practices, through various courses and working platforms, trainings and awareness raising on the topic. NATO also offers education and training support, such as on gender or the fight against trafficking in human beings within sea and land border security courses through its multi-discipline annual catalogue of education, training, and events open to partners.

The Human Security Unit within the International Staff, works in close collaboration with the Cooperative Security Division within the International Military Staff at the NATO Headquarters and other relevant NATO bodies to continue to strengthen and advance human security with partner countries through these mechanisms.

E. In the spotlight

Ukraine and human security

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has put in perspective the importance of human security in modern armed conflict. The atrocities, war crimes, indiscriminate attacks, direct targeting of civilians and damage to critical infrastructure have resulted in incommensurable numbers of civilian deaths, injuries and trauma. War is being waged in the civilian realm just as much as in the military one.



Ms. Irene Fellin, the NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security and for Human Security, with First Deputy Foreign Minister Ms. Emine Dzhaparova at the Wall of Remembrance of the Fallen for Ukraine in May 2023

Since the NATO Summit in Warsaw in July 2016, NATO's practical support for Ukraine has been set out in the Comprehensive Assistance Package (CAP) for Ukraine. NATO's continued delivery of urgently needed non-lethal assistance to Ukraine through the CAP remains a priority for the Alliance.

In order to support Ukraine in the short, medium and long term, Allies have agreed in 2023 to further develop the CAP into a multi-year programme for Ukraine. This multi-year programme will continue to deliver on immediate assistance needs for the war in Ukraine, while concurrently undertaking longer-term projects designed to assist Ukraine with its post-war recovery. Human security features as a line of effort in the implementation plan for the multi-year CAP, with a concrete project under development.

In the context of increasing urbanisation of armed conflict, as seen in Ukraine, careful attention to the protection of civilians is ever more critical. Strengthening the ability of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) to integrate civil environment assessments into overall military planning benefits both civilians and the armed forces.

For this reason, the objective of the human security project within the CAP is to implement a sustainable training programme for the Civil-Military Coordination (CIMIC) officers of the AFU, focusing on NATO's Human Security Agenda, in particular the Protection of Civilians (PoC). Indeed CIMIC, as a joint military-civilian function, represents a vital instrument of the AFU, especially in post-war and reconstruction scenarios. Strengthening CIMIC capabilities, particularly for the protection of civilians, will enable Ukraine to better protect its human capital in the short and long term.

The Centre for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC) was commissioned to conduct a study and make recommendations to understand how the CAP can be used to support human security and the protection of civilians in Ukraine. The study's recommendations include:

- Recognising PoC as a priority for the AFU and integrating PoC initiatives into international assistance programmes;
- Supporting the adoption and implementation of a national PoC strategy and action plan in Ukraine;
- Developing a comprehensive support programme for Ukrainian CIMIC officers with a focus on PoC;
- Assisting in establishing a structured lessons learned initiative to institutionalise good practices for PoC;
- Researching and supporting the development of a civilian harm tracking system within the AFU;
- Aiding Ukraine in countering disinformation and improving strategic communication, especially regarding civilian safety;
- Addressing key gaps in infrastructure protection and supporting the development of shelter infrastructure;
- Supporting comprehensive and coordinated de-mining programmes as well as prioritising mental health support for returning veterans.

In addition, the study suggests leveraging the flexibility of the CAP to design support initiatives that address Ukraine's short and long term needs, while ensuring the mainstreaming of PoC in international support.

Climate change and human security



Royal Danish Navy frigate in the waters around Greenland

Climate change poses new security challenges that affect different societal groups in different ways. In order to understand the human security and climate change nexus, it is crucial to comprehend existing vulnerabilities and how the norms, roles, responsibilities, behaviours and power structures of different groups determine how they are exposed to and manage the risks and impacts of climate change, and how this relates to insecurity.

For example, natural disasters, armed conflicts and other humanitarian emergencies exacerbate gender-based violence (GBV), including conflict-related sexual violence, and diminish means of protection. GBV not only violates and traumatises its survivors, but also undermines the resilience of their communities.

Second- and third-order consequences of climate change and conflict also include deterioration of livelihood conditions, migration and health problems – all of which affect the civil-

ian population in different ways and thus have potential security implications.

NATO is committed to integrating human security as its work on climate change and security progresses. So what is NATO doing in this regard?

Climate Change and Security Risk Management Framework

NATO has developed a prototype for the Climate Change and Security Risk Management Framework (CCSRMF) for the Vilnius Summit in 2023. The CCSRMF is a geospatial data-based risk analysis tool designed to inform decision-making on the impacts of climate change on security. In the preliminary phase of development, NATO incorporated climate modelled projected data with other socio-economic datasets including human security factors, to produce a risk analysis of how NATO's key areas will be affected by climate change. One of the applications produced within the tool looks at popu-

lation and adaptive capacity to examine the impacts of climate change on human security, including countries' adaptive capacity to deal with the consequences, and the likely impact on regional security.

For example, competition over increasingly scarce resources is likely to exacerbate state fragility, fuel conflict and drive migration, thus creating conditions that could be exploited by non-state armed groups. The wider impacts of climate change may also make peace and stability harder to sustain, particularly in countries with a narrow natural resource base or where competition over resources already influences conflict dynamics.

Sahel Region

In the Sahel Region, climate change has a detrimental effect on the livelihoods, particularly agriculture and pastoralism, of the local population. In 2023, 16 million people affected by climate change and conflict in the Central Sahel were in need of humanitarian aid.⁵ Decades of conflict, poverty and frequent displacement have weakened the capacity to cope with and adapt to climate change of people in the Sahel region. While migration in the Sahel has traditionally been used to adapt to seasonal patterns, climate change effects such as rainfall variability and periodic drought are increasingly leading to longer-term or even permanent migration.⁶ NATO cooperates with Mauritania, a long-standing NATO partner, on raising awareness of the security challenges posed by climate change in the Sahel Region.

Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

Climate change can fuel food and water insecurity, which can disrupt livelihoods, spur migration, and lead to social instability and violence. In turn, forced migration and displacement increase the risk of human rights violations, including risks of trafficking in human beings and

modern slavery. Affected populations are more vulnerable to recruitment by non-state armed groups and terrorist actors, potentially resulting in tensions or armed conflict. The Second Annual Conference on Climate Change and Security jointly organised by the NATO-Istanbul Cooperation Initiative Regional Centre and the Innovation, Hybrid and Cyber Division at NATO Headquarters in April 2024 included focused discussions on the vital link between climate change and human security in the Gulf Region with a particular focus on natural resource security, migration and displacement. For example, while climate change induced events may not per se trigger migration, they are likely to affect the social, economic and political factors that influence an individual's, family's or population group's decision relating to migration, including displacement. Climate change-related migration often occurs in situations of greater vulnerability, disproportionately affecting those who have already been subjected to discrimination, marginalisation and systematic inequality. Forced migration and displacement increase the risk of human rights violations, including risks of trafficking in human beings and modern slavery.

In Iraq extreme heat and changes in rainfall patterns are aggravating loss of livelihoods and water scarcity. This increases the vulnerability of the local population, including children, to recruitment by militias, as well as to trafficking and GBV and exacerbates humanitarian needs. Within its mandate, NATO Mission Iraq works with the Republic of Iraq to address the security challenges posed by climate change. In May 2024, NATO organised a workshop on the security implications of climate change in Iraq, including a panel discussion on the nexus between climate change and human security. This builds on earlier work, including at the Berlin Climate Security Conference in 2023, where NATO co-organised a table-top exercise on the climate security in Iraq.

5 International Rescue Committee; "Climate and humanitarian crisis in the central Sahel"; June 2023; accessible at https://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/202306/IRC%20Report_Climate%20%26%20Humanitarian%20Crisis%20Central%20Sahel.pdf.

6 United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; "Advancing a rights-based approach to climate change resilience and migration in the Sahel"; November 2022; accessible at <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/Climate-Change-migration-Sahel-report.pdf>.



NATO's five human security areas of work

As per NATO's Human Security Approach and Guiding Principles, human security at NATO currently encompasses five areas of work: Protection of Civilians (PoC); Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV); Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings (CTHB); Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC); and Cultural Property Protection (CPP).

In each of these areas, NATO has identified key priorities where its actions can add value to the efforts of the international community. These relate primarily to preventing and responding to human security-related violations; reporting violations and supporting monitoring processes; educating and training of Allies and partner nations forces; raising awareness of local security forces; as well as sustaining political dialogue.

The dedicated policies within each area of work aim to provide a coherent, consistent and integrated political framework for NATO's role in that area. NATO also recognises the strong inter-linkages between different policies and is engaged in an effort to ensure alignment and coherence between the various work areas and policies.

A. Protection of Civilians (PoC)

1. What is it for NATO?

Protection of Civilians (PoC) includes all efforts undertaken to avoid, minimise and mitigate the negative effects that may result from NATO and NATO-led military operations, missions and activities on the civilian population. These efforts include the use of force to prevent, deter, preempt and respond to situations in which civilians suffer or are under the threat of physical violence.

2. Why does it matter to NATO?

PoC is a centrepiece of achieving military objectives while safeguarding lives. Indeed, integrating PoC when conducting operations, missions or activities allows NATO to consider measures to reduce risks and mitigate further harm to civilians.

As the Allied Command Operations (ACO) Protection of Civilians Handbook⁷ states: "Lack of consideration for PoC or PoC-related issues will have a negative impact on the overall mission and will hinder consideration of the root causes of the conflict or crisis, jeopardising its success

⁷ Find it here: <https://shape.nato.int/news-archive/2021/the-protection-of-civilians-allied-command-operations-handbook>.

and long-term stability in the conflict or crisis area. PoC failures will generate negative strategic effects and their consequences will reverberate at all levels of command. PoC is therefore key for mission success and legitimacy”.

3. What is NATO's approach?

At the 2016 Warsaw Summit, NATO Leaders endorsed the NATO Policy for the Protection of Civilians. The policy was developed with NATO partners and in consultation with the UN and other relevant international organizations.

In 2018, a NATO Military Concept on the Protection of Civilians was adopted to put the policy into practice. The Concept for the Protection of Civilians sets the framework as depicted in figure 2 below.

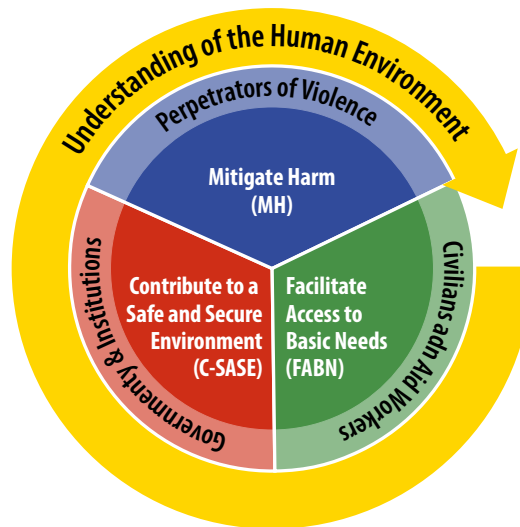


Figure 2

It includes four objectives⁸:

- **Understanding the Human Environment** (such as the culture, history, demographics, strengths and vulnerabilities): this is achieved by applying a ‘population-centric’ view on the overall operating environment, and by analysing and assessing the strengths and vulnerabilities of the population. It seeks to identify existing or potential threats to civilians in order to integrate PoC factors into the planning of NATO operations and activities to enable the following PoC areas.
- **Mitigate Harm:** to avoid causing harm to civilians by their actions, the military is to exercise caution in operations and activities, and apply civilian casualty management to mitigate negative effects if harm was caused. To prevent or mitigate harm caused by other belligerents’ actions, the military uses influence, within the mission mandate, to prevent, deter, pre-empt and respond to situations where civilians are subject to unlawful violence or are under the threat of it.

⁸ See Allied Joint Doctrine (AJP)-01; Annex AF.

- **Facilitate access by the population to basic needs and services:** while NATO or NATO-led forces are not normally responsible for providing basic needs to the civilian population, they can play an important role, in accordance with the mandate, by contributing to the provision of a safe and secure environment, which is normally the responsibility of a civil administration or humanitarian aid organizations. In exceptional circumstances, and based on humanitarian considerations, NATO may also respond to requests for assistance by humanitarian actors.
- **Contribute to a safe and secure environment through support to the local government and its institutions:** the primary role is to provide the necessary security conditions to reduce the chance of localised or widespread escalation, conflagration or reversion into armed conflict. It supports the strengthening or re-establishment of a sufficient protective environment to enable conditions to develop long term security and stability where the population is served by a functional, legitimate, sustainable and resilient government. While it is primarily the responsibility of the host nation governmental authorities, NATO's role in this area could be to support their efforts if their capacity is insufficient.

Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response

NATO is part of the International Contact Group on Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response (CHMR), which focuses on reducing harm to civilians during combat, and responding appropriately when harm occurs.

The aim of this Contact Group is to exchange experiences and best practices in the field of CHMR and to explore ways of enhancing international cooperation in this area.

While CHMR remains primarily a National responsibility, NATO is a key partner in the effort, both by providing a platform for Allies to agree on shared standards, and by advancing informally the status of CHMR within each Ally. NATO also benefits from National expertise shared in the Contact Group and uses it to identify entry points for integrating CHMR into its own line of work, such as policy or doctrine. NATO also adjusts its civilian harm mitigation efforts to include specific guidance on the preventing, reducing or responding to child casualties in its missions, operations and activities.

Emerging and disruptive technologies (EDTs)

NATO is mindful of the nexus between PoC and emerging and disruptive technologies, such as autonomous weapon systems (AWS). The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) understands AWS as any weapon that selects and applies force to targets without human intervention.⁹ While AWS may present opportunities and could

help protect civilians in certain circumstances, their use also presents risks and raises questions from humanitarian, legal, security, technological and ethical perspectives.¹⁰ NATO takes these considerations into its work, including in cooperation with the broader security community.



⁹ See ICRC website; “What you need to know about autonomous weapons” of 26 July 2022; accessible at: <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/what-you-need-know-about-autonomous-weapons>.

¹⁰ See United Nations General Assembly document A/C.1/78/L.56 on “Lethal autonomous weapons systems”; Seventy-eighth session, First Committee, Agenda item 99, General and complete disarmament.

The Approaches to the Protection of Civilians in NATO and UN Peace Operations Course

The NATO UN PoC Course at the [Finnish Defence Forces International Centre](https://puolustusvoimat.fi/en/web/fincent/-/the-approaches-to-the-protection-of-civilians-in-nato-and-un-peace-operations-course) (FINCENT) explores how military forces should protect civilians in modern warfare, an increasingly challenging but crucial task.

Since the pilot course in 2018, more than 170 learners from 35 countries, including NATO members and contributors to UN peace operations, have been able to take the course. It aims to establish a common understanding across civilian and military participants of the role of the UN and NATO as protection actors in operations, which is critical in a context where the military operates alongside other protection actors in armed conflict or crisis.

Awareness of how military operations' "own actions" have negative and even devastating consequences for civilians caught up in conflict is well captured in policy and doctrine, but remains a challenge to fully operationalise on the ground.

The NATO UN PoC Course is developed by FINCENT, together with the Norwegian Defence International Centre (NODEFIC), NATO, the UN, PAX Protection of Civilians, the Centre of Excellence for Civil-Military Cooperation, the U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI), the Centre for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC), and the ICRC.¹¹



Participants of the NATO UN PoC course at FINCENT

¹¹ For more information, visit this website: <https://puolustusvoimat.fi/en/web/fincent/-/the-approaches-to-the-protection-of-civilians-in-nato-and-un-peace-operations-course>.

B. Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV)

1. What is it for NATO?

NATO defines Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) as rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, forced sterilisation, forced marriage and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls or boys that is directly or indirectly linked to a conflict.¹²

2. Why does it matter to NATO?

Noting that CRSV is an impediment to sustainable peace, NATO Heads of State and Government expressed their commitment to the fight against sexual violence in conflict both at the Summit in Chicago (2012) and in Wales (2014).

NATO recognises that CRSV constitutes a violation or abuse of human rights that may amount to a serious violation of International Law, including International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and International Human Rights Law (IHRL). CRSV is rooted in gender inequality and discrimination and as such is more likely to affect women and girls, while men and boys are also targeted.

CRSV is frequently, deliberately and strategically used by state and non-state actors to target civilians. It inflicts long-term trauma on individuals and families, destroys the social fabric of communities, triggers displacement, fuels the activities of armed actors and fosters protracted conflict and instability.

When used or commissioned as a deliberate tactic of war or as a part of a widespread or systematic attack against civilian populations, CRSV can significantly exacerbate situations of instability, crisis, or armed conflict and may impede the restoration of peace and security.

3. What is NATO's approach?

The NATO Policy on Preventing and Responding to CRSV was endorsed by NATO Leaders at the 2021 Brussels Summit to provide a coherent, consistent and integrated political framework for NATO's role in preventing and responding to CRSV. It outlines the measures NATO will take to prevent and respond to CRSV in all NATO operations, missions and activities. CRSV considerations are to be integrated into all phases of mission and operation planning, and as for other human security-related policies, education, training and exercises, play an important role for the

¹² NATO is aligned with the definition of CRSV in the Report of the United Nations Secretary General, June 2020.

implementation of the Policy. Furthermore, the Policy also provides guidance for applying a survivor-centred approach if NATO personnel encounter victims/survivors of CRSV.

In 2022, following the endorsement of the new policy, the 2015-NATO Military Guidelines on the Prevention and Response to Conflict-related Sexual Violence were updated, establishing inter alia NATO Commanders' responsibility, at strategic, operational and tactical levels to include all necessary measures to prevent and respond to CRSV throughout all phases of the NATO Crisis Response Process. The Military Guidelines also provide details on reporting and support of monitoring CRSV, how to respond to CRSV and coordinate and interact with other international and national actors on the ground including international organisations such as the United Nations, NGOs and civil society.

NATO's approach to preventing and responding to CRSV is reinforced through the established interlinkages and cross-references with the three other human security-related policies and other areas of works. These include, in particular, NATO's Policy on Women, Peace and Security, which further highlights the strong complementary and reinforcing relationship between the two agendas. Furthermore, CRSV is also reflected in NATO's work on Battlefield Evidence, as both the Battlefield Evidence Policy and the Programme of Work reflect on the potential use of Battlefield Evidence to support law enforcement outcomes.

C. Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings (CTHB)

1. What is it for NATO?

NATO's understanding of trafficking in human beings is aligned with the "Palermo Protocol"¹³. It defines trafficking in human beings as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purposes of exploitation. The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children is considered to be trafficking even if it does not involve any of the above means.

Exploitation includes prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

Factors such as political instability, poverty and gender inequality create an environment conducive to the trafficking of human beings.

2. Why does it matter to NATO?

While NATO is not the first responder to trafficking in human beings, combatting, responding to and preventing trafficking in human beings contributes to enhancing NATO's operational effectiveness and credibility. NATO also condemns all acts of human trafficking as they are contrary to NATO's core values. Trafficking in human beings is a violation and a serious abuse of human rights and is an offense to human dignity.

NATO recognises that anyone can be targeted regardless of their ethnicity, age, gender, nationality, class and other identity factors, but notes that vulnerable groups are at higher risk of exploitation.

Trafficking can compromise efforts to secure peace and stabilisation in conflict and post-conflict environments, including where NATO operates, and has the potential to weaken and destabilise the ability of governments to protect their citizens.

Any armed conflict increases the number of displaced and impoverished people, subsequently causing greater vulnerabilities with more people at risk of being exploited through organised crime networks. Of particular concern to NATO, the risks of human trafficking have increased significantly as a result of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

¹³ Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000): <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/protocol-prevent-suppress-and-punish-trafficking-persons>.

3. What is NATO's approach?

NATO's first Policy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings (CTHB) from 2004 committed NATO to reinforcing efforts to prevent, mitigate and respond to this threat.

At the 2023 Vilnius Summit, NATO Heads of State and Government endorsed an updated NATO Policy on CTHB. This new policy commits NATO to avoid, to the maximum extent possible, any action that contributes to any form of trafficking in human beings, including as part of NATO's supply chain and procurement. The policy also outlines efforts to include human trafficking considerations into doctrine, training, education and exercises and in the planning and conduct of operations. All measures need to be gender-responsive, age-sensitive, victim-centred and trauma-informed.

As part of its prevention efforts, NATO is also committed to assessing risks to NATO missions, operations and activities, where applicable.

NATO's Support and Procurement Agency's efforts on CTHB

In recent years, NATO has stepped up its efforts on combatting trafficking in human beings. This includes measures taken as part of its procurement processes and through due diligence in supply chain management to ensure that NATO funds are not used to support actions related to trafficking in human beings, both directly or indirectly.

The NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA), is NATO's lead organisation for multinational acquisition, support and sustainment in all domains. This support ranges from the multinational acquisition of complex platforms, such as aircraft, helicopters and uncrewed systems, to the provision of supplies such as fuel, spare parts and ammunition, or services including the maintenance of radars for air defence, as well as deployable infrastructure, transportation, medical and catering services.

In 2023, NSPA adopted a revised version of its Supplier Code of Conduct which stipulates substantive rules that suppliers must follow. Non-compliance with these rules can lead to debarment, making a supplier ineligible to participate in NSPA procurements. This Code of Conduct includes prohibitions against engaging in human rights violations, subjecting employees to inhumane or degrading treatment, and using forced labour.

"Suppliers shall respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights and shall ensure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses."¹⁴

"Suppliers shall not have recourse to any use of forced, bonded, indentured labour or involuntary prison labour."¹⁵

Also introduced in 2023, the Debarment Operating Instruction establishes a proce-

cedure for debarment of suppliers engaged in sanctionable practices, such as violating the Code of Conduct. This procedure ensures that NSPA conducts business only with suppliers who uphold high ethical standards. The development of the Debarment Operating Instruction was guided by considerations of due process and the need to adequately protect the victims of human rights violations. To enforce this procedure, NSPA is collaborating with domestic investigative authorities.

NSPA's proactive measures to enforce standards of ethical conduct within its supply chains reflect NATO's commitment to human rights and ethical business practices.

¹⁴ Supplier Code of Conduct of 2 May 2023; article 5.1.1.

¹⁵ Supplier Code of Conduct of 2 May 2023; article 4.1.1.

D. Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC)

1. What is it for NATO?

For NATO, a child is any human being below the age of 18 years. The Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC) Agenda emerged in the UN Security Council Resolution 1261 from 1999¹⁶, which identified and condemned six grave violations against children in armed conflict:

1. Killing or maiming
2. Recruitment or use of child soldiers
3. Rape and other forms of sexual violence
4. Abduction
5. Attacks against schools or hospitals
6. Denial of humanitarian access



Italian military personnel in Kosovo in the context of the initiative of the Multinational Battle Group West (MNBG W): "A day with KFOR", at an educational centre for children

16 See here: <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1261>.

NATO has recognised these six grave violations, as well as other serious violations or abuses against children in armed conflict as falling within the scope of its CAAC Agenda.

Gender aspects are also taken into consideration when addressing CAAC, as boys and girls are affected differently by armed conflict. In many conflicts, armed groups intentionally target a more boys for recruitment or use as child soldiers and girls for sexual violence. However, it is essential to recognise that both boys and girls can be victims of both types of violations.

2. Why does it matter to NATO?

Children are involved in and affected by crises and armed conflicts in various ways. Children in armed conflict must be considered primarily as victims and need to be afforded special protection. Indeed, their involvement in conflict or crisis has long-term implications for society; patterns of violence rooted in communities are passed on to younger generations thereby threatening long-term stability and increasing the renewal of violence. The rehabilitation and reintegration into society of children who have been involved in warfare is a challenging and complex endeavour. The protection of children in armed conflict is therefore an important aspect of a comprehensive strategy for conflict resolution and the establishment of lasting peace and security.

The growing complexity of security environments, with conflicts increasingly taking place in densely populated urban areas, disproportionately affects children. NATO forces may operate in this challenging human terrain, making it important for the Alliance to support the CAAC Agenda.

3. What is NATO's approach?

At the Wales Summit in 2014, NATO committed to implementing UNSCR 1261 of 1999¹⁷, UNSCR 1612 of 2005¹⁸ and other relevant UN Security Council Resolutions during operations, missions and activities. As a result, NATO forces should consider the relevance and impact of the six grave violations in any operational theatre and deduct from their assessment what role they can play in countering these violations, thereby increasing protection for affected children.

At the 2023 Summit in Vilnius, NATO Leaders endorsed the Alliance's first Policy on CAAC. The policy aims to assist NATO in better preventing harm to children in armed conflict, and protecting children in its missions, operations and activities.

NATO recognises that children have specific protection and security needs that are different from those of adults. In response, NATO has to develop tailored approaches when dealing with children, including for example in cases in which children come into temporary custody of NATO.

Because a large part of the responsibility of dealing with CAAC lies with non-military actors, in particular non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil-military cooperation is key in this area. These actors will also be able to provide in-depth information on the presence of children in the mission area, and how best to protect them. The CIMIC unit of an operation, mission or activity liaises with officials of the different leading international organisations and relevant NGOs active in the area of operations.

¹⁷ See here: <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1261>.

¹⁸ See here: <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1612>.

Conference “NATO CAAC Policy - Actions Forward”

In February 2024, the NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security and Human Security, Ms. Irene Fellin, hosted, at the UNICEF Innocenti Global Foresight and Research Center, a conference on the actions forward on the NATO Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC) Policy. The intention of the event was to support and inform the implementation of the CAAC Policy. Topics of discussion included best practices on integrating CAAC into military doctrine, guidance and training; assessing risks related to CAAC; developing hand-over protocols for children associated with armed forces and armed groups and safeguards for the custody or detention of children.

The conference engaged key stakeholders and connected the NATO civilian and military participants with a wide range of child protection experts, including from UNICEF, the ICRC, Save the Children International, Amnesty International, national subject matter experts, and many other representatives of NGOs. It is an example of good cooperation with the UN and civil society actors, as per the seventh principle of the Human Approach and Guiding Principles.



Participants at the “NATO Children and Armed Conflict Policy – Actions Forward” conference in February 2024

E. Cultural Property Protection (CPP)



KFOR mission providing protection for the Visoki Decani Monastery in Kosovo¹⁹

1. What is it for NATO?

For NATO, cultural property includes cultural objects and all places of worship. Cultural property concerns both movable or immovable property that enjoys recognition and protection under customary international law and, as applicable, treaty law.²⁰

CPP is defined in article 2 of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict as “the safeguarding of and respect for such property”.

In practice, CPP describes all efforts dedicated to managing the various challenges related to cultural property, both in peacetime through preparatory measures, as well as in the event of armed conflict and particularly during military operations.

19 The NATO KFOR deployment was tasked to monitor and protect cultural sites in Kosovo in 2002 in order to avoid their further looting and damage and to prevent their deterioration. Given the intricate role cultural property plays in post-conflict stabilisation and recovery, CPP continues to be a key part of the KFOR mission. KFOR's role is primarily that of third responder - providing support, as needed, when the Kosovo authorities or the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) request it. Protection for eight designated sites has now been transferred from KFOR to local actors, but one site remains under fixed KFOR protection. See NATO website at: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_48818.htm.

20 Bi-Strategic Command Directive 086-005. Implementing Cultural Property Protection in NATO and NATO-led operations and missions (SH/J9/CL/SG/TT001345).

NATO is not a party to these treaties, therefore its role is to support Allies' obligations towards cultural property and to embed CPP into all phases of military operations, missions and activities, as well as in delivering education, training and exercises.

2. Why does it matter to NATO?

NATO has long recognised CPP as an essential consideration in the military environment and a critical indicator of community security, stability, cohesion and identity.

CPP is also considered an element of mission success. Damage to or destruction of cultural property, whether deliberate or accidental, can increase violence and escalate conflict or tension. Appreciation of cultural property and its factoring into military planning and operations leads to a better understanding of conflict environments and their drivers for instability.

Cultural property is part of people's identity. Its destruction undermines societal resilience and community identity and is often employed as a tactic of war in conflict and crisis – jeopardising the ability of conflict-affected societies to recover and rebuild in the wake of armed conflict.

3. What is NATO's approach?



An Italian Regional Command West (RC-W) guard in Deçan, Kosovo, in 2020²¹

NATO recognises international treaties, in particular, the 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its two Protocols of 1954 and 1999, the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and its Additional Protocols, relevant United Nations Secu-

21 See footnote 12

ity Council Resolutions, as well as the UNESCO Convention on the Means on Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property of 1970, and related treaties such as the Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage dated 2001 and its Protocol.

In 2019, NATO developed a Bi-Strategic Command Directive on CPP. It provides direction and guidance to support the continued and active institutionalisation of CPP throughout relevant activities. The aim of the Directive is to ensure that CPP considerations are integrated across all phases of military operations and enhance coordination.

Integrating CPP into a mission, operation or activity requires identifying cultural property within engagement parameters, but also considering at the significance of cultural property to the identity and culture of the population. Thus, the fundamental key to effective CPP is solid liaison and effective coordination between the military and the cultural heritage sector, including the host nation's Ministry of Culture or equivalent as well as relevant international and non-governmental organisations, including UNESCO.

NATO's engagement on CPP

In February 2023, the NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security and Human Security, Ms. Irene Fellin, hosted a Conference on "CPP and NATO: Experience, Practices and Trends". The aim of the Conference was to assess the implications for Allies and NATO of the growing international concern for the protection of cultural property in armed conflict. It brought together a wide range of civilian and military practitioners, experts and national representatives and served as a scoping discussion in support of NATO's work on CPP.



The conference on 'Cultural Property Protection and NATO: Experiences, Practices and Trends' hosted by the NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women Peace and Security and Human Security, Ms. Irene Fellin, in February 2023, which focused on both traditional aspects of Cultural Property Protection and more innovative ones, such as emerging threats.

NATO is also actively addressing the link between cultural property trafficking and terrorism financing. Indeed, looting and illicit trade of cultural property is an important aspect of modern warfare, both as a source of proceeds for organised criminal activity and for the financing of terrorist organisations and networks. For this reason, the counter-terrorism unit within NATO is currently developing a course on CPP as a means



The international conference for the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Hague Convention for the protection of cultural property in the event of an armed conflict

to counter terrorism financing, aimed to be delivered to NATO partners in the Middle East, North Africa and Sahel by the NATO Centre of Excellence for Stability Policing.

Finally, NATO is committed to promoting cultural property as a tool for peacebuilding. The presence and engagement of the NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security and Human Security, Ms. Irene Fellin, in May 2024 at the conference commemorating the 70th anniversary of the 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict illustrates this commitment. She highlighted the international legal framework on CPP, NATO's history on CPP in past missions, operations and activities, as well as new areas of work on the topic and international collaboration.

A close-up, low-angle shot of a soldier in camouflage tactical gear. The soldier is holding a black rifle with a yellow magazine. A wristband with the word 'ALLIES' and a flag is visible on the soldier's left wrist. The background shows a clear blue sky and some green foliage.

Way ahead for human security at NATO

As it celebrates its 75th anniversary, NATO maintains its commitment to human security and is dedicated to advancing its efforts in this area. This is illustrated by the increasing inclusion and importance of human security in Summit declarations and Communiqués and its inclusion in the 2022 Strategic Concept.

NATO recognises the importance of setting standards on human security for its Allies and partners. In this vein, NATO will seek to further strengthen its policy framework, to integrate human security considerations across its entire enterprise and in its three core tasks, as well as to continue working on operationalising it on the ground. This will involve strengthening partnerships with international organizations and civil society groups, as well as engaging with local communities to understand their needs and priorities. NATO will continue to explore the nexus between human security and all areas of work, including in emerging domains. This process also entails aligning all relevant policy, doctrine and guidance, so that the Alliance can effectively face present and future security challenges.



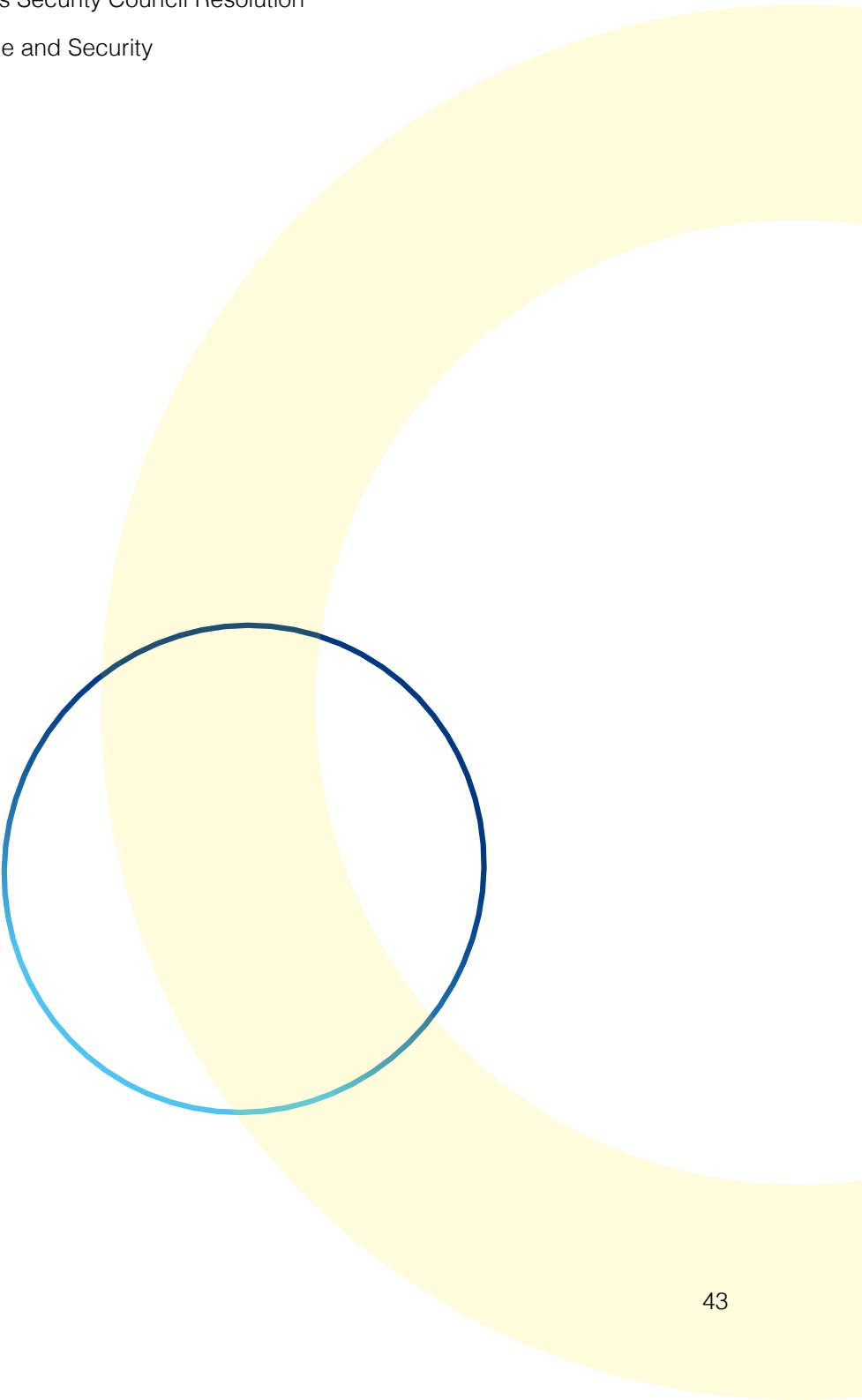
Human security is at the core of what NATO does and who NATO is. It is inherently embedded in the Alliance's commitment to defending and promoting the principles of democracy, individual liberty, human rights, and the rule of law.

For this reason and in order to meet its ambition as stated in the 2022 Strategic Concept, NATO will identify a golden thread on human security – to enable the entire NATO structure, from the political level down to the soldiers on the ground, to further their understanding of the meaning of human security for a political-military Alliance such as NATO. By doing so, NATO is contributing to a safer and more prosperous world for all.

LIST OF ACCRONYMS

ACO	Allied Command Operations
ACT	Allied Command Transformation
AFU	Armed Forces of Ukraine
CAAC	Children and Armed Conflict
CAP	Comprehensive Assistance Package
CCSRMF	Climate Change and Security Risk Management Framework
CHMR	Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response
CIMIC	Civil-military cooperation
CIVIC	Centre for Civilians in Conflict
COE	NATO Centre of Excellence
CPP	Cultural Property Protection
CRSV	Conflict-Related Sexual Violence
CTHB	Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings
EDTs	Emerging and Disruptive Technologies
EU	European Union
FINCENT	Finnish Defence Forces International Centre
GBV	Gender-based Violence
HSU	Human Security Unit
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IMS	International Military Staff
IS	International Staff
ITPP	Individually Tailored Partnership Programme
MC2HS	Military Contribution to Human Security
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NODEFIC	Norwegian Defence International Centre
PKSOI	U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute
PoC	Protection of Civilians

SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander Europe
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WPS	Women, Peace and Security



FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on the content of this publication, please contact the Human Security Unit at:

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